

St. John The Baptist
Filed Jun 04, 2026 8:10 AM
Deputy Clerk of Court
E-File Received Jun 03, 2026 4:21 PM

C-85336
A

Exhibit A

**40th JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
PARISH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
STATE OF LOUISIANA**

NO. C-85336

DIV. A

**RURAL ROOTS LOUISIANA, HARRY JOSEPH SR.,
and LOUISIANA BUCKET BRIGADE,**

Plaintiffs,

VERSUS

THE PORT OF SOUTH LOUISIANA,

Defendant.

**AMENDED PETITION FOR DECLARATORY AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF
WITH SUPPLEMENTAL PETITION AT PARAGRAPHS 30-36**

NOW INTO COURT, through undersigned counsel, come Rural Roots Louisiana, Harry Joseph Sr., and the Louisiana Bucket Brigade (collectively, "Plaintiffs"), who bring this action pursuant to La. Code of Civ. Proc. Art. 1871 for declaratory and injunctive relief to obtain a judicial determination as to whether the Port of South Louisiana ("Defendant" or "the Port") must publish public notice in the official journal of the State, pursuant to Article VII, Section 8(C) of the Louisiana Constitution, of its decision to preliminarily authorize the issuance of up to \$400 million in revenue bonds and \$40 million in bond anticipation notes.

If the Court determines that the Port must publish notice of the decision to issue bonds in the official journal of the State, Plaintiffs request an order from this Court restraining the Port from proceeding with the bond issuance until such time as notice has been properly published.

BACKGROUND

1. The Port of South Louisiana plans to issue \$400 million in bonds for the construction of a major dock and ancillary facilities. As confirmed in records obtained from the Port in response to a public records request, the Port did not publish public notice of its decision to do so in the official journal of the State as required by Article VII, Section 8(C) of the Louisiana Constitution. Proper legal notice is important, as a general matter, and even more so in this instance because the

NON-CERTIFIED COPY

publication of notice starts a 30-day clock which is the only time during which the validity of bond issuances may be questioned, pursuant to La. Const. art. VII, § 8(C).

2. Through media reporting and public records requests, it has been revealed that the \$400 million in bonds is intended for construction of a major dock project and ancillary facilities to serve heavy industrial projects planned for the west bank of Ascension Parish in Modeste. These projects have been shrouded in secrecy through non-disclosure agreements among state, local, and Port officials¹ as well as confidentiality exemptions pursuant to controversial amendments in 2024 to the Public Records Law allowing for records pertaining to negotiations of economic development projects to be withheld from the public.²

3. This case is brought in the 40th Judicial District because the Port does not have jurisdictional authority over Ascension Parish, while it does have jurisdictional authority in St. John the Baptist Parish and its offices are located in Reserve.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

4. This court has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to La. Const. art. VII, § 8, governing the issuance of bonds, and La. Code of Civ. Proc. art. 1871, governing declaratory judgments.

5. Venue is proper in this Court for actions against state agencies, pursuant to La. R.S. § 13:5104, as this Court presides in the judicial district in which the Port has jurisdictional authority, pursuant to La. R.S. § 34:2471(A), and in which its offices are located, i.e. at 1720 La. Hwy. 44, Reserve, Louisiana, 70084.

PARTIES

6. Plaintiff Rural Roots Louisiana (“Rural Roots”) was founded in 2023, in Donaldsonville, Louisiana. Its mission is to introduce kids to social justice and care of the earth, provide literacy programs, promote community stewardship, and help make communities aware and educate kids on social justice by teaching art and gardening. Rural Roots’ members live in

¹ Drew Hawkins, *'A muzzle on elected officials': NDAs 'cloak' Louisiana's biggest business developments*, Mississippi Public Broadcasting (Mar. 27, 2026), <https://www.mpbonline.org/blogs/news/a-muzzle-on-elected-officials-ndas-cloak-louisianas-biggest-business-developments/>.

² Shawn Wilson, *Behind Closed Doors: Louisiana's Dangerous New Transparency Law*, The Bayou Insider (Apr. 26, 2025), <https://thebayouinsider.substack.com/p/behind-closed-doors-louisianas-dangerous>.

Ascension Parish and in the area targeted for dock construction for heavy industrial projects at issue in this matter. Rural Roots purchases goods within and pays sales taxes to the State of Louisiana and Parish of Ascension.

7. Harry Joseph Sr. is a pastor and a resident of Ascension Parish. He owns property, purchases goods, and pays sales taxes in the State and Ascension Parish, and resides in an area that would be affected by the Port's construction project and heavy industrial expansion.

8. Louisiana Bucket Brigade ("Bucket Brigade"), is a Louisiana nonprofit organization, based in New Orleans, that works for environmental health and justice with communities in Louisiana located near heavy industry. The organization works to achieve a healthy, prosperous, pollution-free and just state where people, their health and environment are valued and prioritized over profit. The Bucket Brigade has staff who do work in Ascension Parish in the area targeted for the Port's construction project to be funded by the bond issuance. The Bucket Brigade purchases goods within the state and pays sales taxes to the State of Louisiana as do its members and staff.

9. Defendant Port of South Louisiana is a political subdivision of the State of Louisiana, pursuant to La. R.S. § 34:2471(A).

FACTS

10. On August 5, 2025, the Board of Commissioners of the Port of South Louisiana adopted a resolution giving preliminary approval to the issuance of up to \$400 million in revenue bonds and up to \$40 million in bond anticipation notes.

11. Article VII, Section 8(B) of the Louisiana Constitution requires that "No bonds or other obligations shall be issued or sold by the state, directly or through any state board, agency, or commission, or by any political subdivision of the state, unless prior written approval of the bond commission is obtained."

12. The Port is a political subdivision of the State pursuant to the statute creating it, La. R.S. § 34:2471(A).³

³ A separate article in the Louisiana Constitution addresses bond issuances by local governments and their political subdivisions and requires that public notice be made in "the official journal of the political subdivision or, if there is none, in a newspaper having general circulation therein." La. Const. art. VI, § 35(B). The Port of South Louisiana is not included within the definition of "political subdivision" as it is used and defined for purposes of Article VI. In accordance with La. Const. art. VI, § 44(2), "political subdivision" throughout that article and context "means a parish, municipality, and any other unit of local government, including a school board and a special district,

13. Article VII, Section 8(C) of the Louisiana Constitution requires that an issuing agency, “after authorizing the issuance of bonds by resolution, shall publish once in the official journal of the state, as provided by law, a notice of intention to issue the bonds.”

14. Article VII, Section 8(C) further requires that the notice “shall include a description of the bonds and the security therefor.”

15. *The Advocate* newspaper based in Baton Rouge is the official journal of the State.⁴

16. In addition, the Louisiana Register is a monthly publication published by the Louisiana Division of Administration to provide access to legal notices issued by the executive branch of the state government.⁵

17. Plaintiffs’ counsel have undertaken a search of both of these journals and found no public notices of the Port’s decision on August 5, 2025, to preliminarily authorize the bond issuance.

18. On March 16, 2026, Plaintiffs, through their counsel, inquired of the Port whether it had published a public notice of the August 5, 2025, resolution, and asked for a copy of any published notice.

19. The Port responded on March 18, 2026, with an affidavit showing that the minutes of the special meeting of the Board of Commissioners where the resolution was adopted were published in the *L’Observateur* on October 22, 2025. Affidavit of publication, annexed hereto as Exhibit A.

20. The *L’Observateur*⁶ is a local newspaper distributed through the parishes of St. John the Baptist, St. Charles and St. James, and is not the official journal of the state of Louisiana.

21. The notice published by the Port did not comply with the constitutional requirement in Article VII, section 8(C) that it be published “in the official journal of the state.”

authorized by law to perform governmental functions.” The Port of South Louisiana is “political subdivision of the state” and not a “unit of local government.”

⁴ See La. R.S. § 43:81 and Legislative Glossary, available at <https://www.legis.la.gov/legis/Glossary.aspx>.

⁵ Available at <https://www.doa.la.gov/doa/osr/louisiana-register/>.

⁶ Available at <https://lobservateur.com/services/about-us/>.

22. The notice of the meeting minutes also did not comply with the constitutional requirement that the notice of a bond issuance “include a description of the bonds and the security therefor.”

23. The notice as published did not mention what the \$400 million in bonds and \$40 million in bond anticipation notes would be spent on, nor where.

24. Rather, as shown below, the notice simply described the resolution as “giving preliminary approval to the issuance of not exceeding (i) four hundred million dollars (\$400,000,000) of revenue bonds and (ii) forty million dollars (\$40,000,000) of bond anticipation notes of the Port of South Louisiana and providing for other matters in connection therewith.”

ITEM 5B. CONSIDER RESOLUTION GIVING PRELIMINARY APPROVAL TO THE ISSUANCE OF NOT EXCEEDING (i) FOUR HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS (\$400,000,000) OF REVENUE BONDS AND (ii) FORTY MILLION DOLLARS (\$40,000,000) OF BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES OF THE PORT OF SOUTH LOUISIANA AND PROVIDING FOR OTHER MATTERS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH.

A Motion was offered by Commissioner Bazile and seconded by Commissioner Dumas to adopt that Resolution, which is attached as Exhibit 5B. After discussion, the Motion was called for a vote, which was as follows:

YEAS Mr. Scontrino, Ms. Dumas, Mrs. Hebert, Mr. Murray, Mr. Burks, Mr. Bazile, Mr. LeBlanc, Mr. Duhe, Mr. Joseph
NAYS None
ABSTAIN None
ABSENT None

25. In response to a public records request, the Port provided the resolution adopted at the special meeting of the Port Board.

26. While the resolution provides at least a bit more information to the effect that the bonds would be used to fund the construction of a dock and ancillary facilities, the resolution did not indicate where the construction would take place nor any other information about the project. Resolution Giving Preliminary Authorization for the Issuances of Bonds, annexed hereto as Exhibit B.

27. The resolution itself was not published in any journal, neither the *L'Observateur* nor *The Advocate*.

28. It is only through public reporting and other records received in response to public records requests that it is clear that this bond issuance is connected to the heavy industrial development in Modeste, Louisiana, in Ascension Parish.⁷

29. Clarity as to the requirements of public notice is not a mere formality. Particularly given the lack of transparency around these developments, the amount of debt being incurred through bond issuances, and the strict requirements for testing the validity of bond issuances, it takes on heightened importance in such circumstances.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs pray that, after due proceedings had, this Court:

- (i) Render a declaratory judgment determining whether the Port of South Louisiana must a) publish notice of resolutions authorizing the issuances of bonds in the official journal of the state, and b) include a description of the bonds and security therefor, pursuant to Article VII, Section 8(C) of the Louisiana Constitution; and,
- (ii) If the answer is affirmative, issue an order restraining the Port from proceeding with the bond issuance before publishing notice as required by Article VII, Section 8(C) of the Louisiana Constitution.

PLAINTIFFS' SUPPLEMENTAL PETITION FOR DECLARATORY AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF

NOW INTO COURT, through undersigned counsel, come Rural Roots Louisiana, Harry Joseph Sr., and the Louisiana Bucket Brigade (collectively, "Plaintiffs"), who bring this Supplemental Petition for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief, pursuant to La. Code of Civ. Proc. art. 1155, to bring forth allegations of fact and an additional claim for relief that have become known to them and exigible since the filing of the original and amended complaint in this matter, who therefore allege as follows:

⁷ Anthony McAuley, *Jeff Landry's trade plan aims to keep peace between Louisiana ports. It just got an early win.*, nola.com (Aug. 24, 2026), https://www.nola.com/news/business/jeff-landrys-trade-plan-aims-to-keep-peace-between-louisiana-ports-it-just-got-an/article_689d3cb5-820c-421c-a4bf-88fc9bf6e0dc.html.

30. Through records received on May 26, 2026, from *L'Observateur* in response to a third-party subpoena, Plaintiffs learned that the notice of the Resolution at issue in this matter was not published in the Oct. 22, 2025, edition of that journal, contrary to the Port's assertion that it had been, and as described in paragraphs 18-25 of the foregoing Amended Complaint.

31. As described in Paragraph 19 of the Amended Complaint, on March 18, 2026, the Port provided an affidavit to undersigned counsel which indicated that the minutes of the special meeting of the Board of Commissioners where the Resolution was adopted were published in the *L'Observateur* on October 22, 2025.

32. Accepting the Port's affidavit as true but not seeing the minutes of the August 5th meeting in the October 22, 2025, edition of *L'Observateur*, nor any other edition, after commencing this litigation, Plaintiffs requested that a document subpoena issue to the publisher for an official copy of the October 22, 2025, edition, as well as all communications with the Port concerning notices to be placed in that edition.

33. On May 26, 2026, the publisher provided a copy of the October 22, 2025, edition, annexed hereto as Exhibit C, along with communications with the Port concerning notices to be published there.

34. As can be seen in that exhibit, the minutes of the August 5th, 2025, special meeting of the Port were not published in that edition, contrary to the representation in the affidavit provided by the Port.

35. The documents received from the publisher also indicate that the Port requested that the minutes of the August 5, 2025, meeting be published, but for some reason unknown to Plaintiffs they were not.

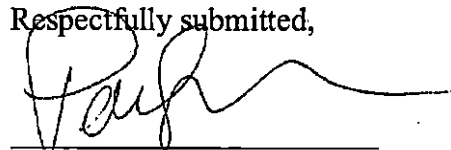
36. Whatever the reason for the failure to publish the minutes of that meeting, the lack of published notice of the Resolution and the proceedings of the Port at the special meeting held on August 5, 2025, violates La. R.S. 43:171, which requires that the proceedings of the governing bodies of political subdivisions of the state be published in a newspaper, and La. R.S. 42:20(B)(2), governing publication of written minutes of meetings of public bodies, in addition to La. Const. art. VII, §8(C) governing notice by state agencies of decisions to issue bonds (which Plaintiffs

urge applies to the Port), as well as La. Const. art. VI, §35(B) governing notice by local governments of such decisions (which the Port argues applies).

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs pray that, in addition to the relief sought in the Amended Complaint, after due proceedings had, this Court also:

- (iii) Declare the Resolution adopted by the Port to be null and avoid, as the written minutes of the proceedings of the special meeting on August 5, 2025, and notice of the Port's Resolution were never published in a newspaper or official journal;
- (iv) Award such other relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

Respectfully submitted,



William P. Quigley
La. Bar Roll No. 7769
Professor Emeritus of Law
Loyola University College of Law
7214 St. Charles Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70118
Tel. (504) 710-3074
Fax (504) 861-5440
quigley77@gmail.com

Pamela C. Spees
La. Bar Roll No. 29679
Astha Sharma Pokharel*
Kayla Vinson*
Center for Constitutional Rights
666 Broadway, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10012
Tel. (212) 614-6431
Fax (212) 614-6499
pspees@ccrjustice.org
astha.sharmapokharel@ccrjustice.org
kvinson@ccrjustice.org

Counsel for Plaintiffs

**pro hac vice application forthcoming*

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a copy of the above and foregoing has been served upon all known counsel of record by electronic mail on this 3rd day of June, 2026.



Pamela C. Spees

Affidavit of Publication

STATE OF LOUISIANA
PARISH OF
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Before me, the undersigned authority, personally
came and appeared

[Signature]

who being duly sworn, deposes and says:

He/She is a duly authorized agent of
L'OBSERVATEUR,
a newspaper published daily at 121 W Sixth
Street, LaPlace, Louisiana, 70068.

Advertising was published in said newspaper in
its issue(s) dated:

\$132.81

10/22/25

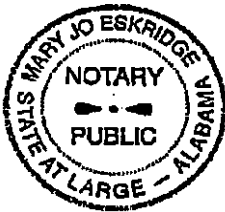
[Signature]

Duly Authorized Agent

Subscribed and sworn to before me this
22nd Day of October, 2025 at LaPlace, LA

Mary Jo Eskridge

Mary Jo Eskridge, Notary Public
State of Alabama at Large
My commission expires 03-02-2026



Account # 189822
Ad # 2060414

PORT OF SOUTH LOUISIANA
P.O. BOX AE
1720 LA HWY 44
RESERVE, LA 70084

PUBLIC NOTICE

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL
COMMISSION MEETING
OF THE PORT OF SOUTH
LOUISIANA COMMISSION
HELD AT THE PORT
OF SOUTH LOUISIANA
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 5,
2025

ITEM 1-CALL TO ORDER
Chairman Murray called the
Meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

ITEM 2-ROLL CALL
Present: Mr. Joseph, Mr. Scon-
trino, Ms. Dumas, Mrs. Hebert,
Mr. LeBlanc, Mr. Murray, Mr. Ba-
zile, Mr. Duhe, Mr. Burks

**ITEM 3. PLEDGE OF ALLE-
GIANCE**

Commissioner Dumas led the
Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM 4. PUBLIC COMMENTS
No public comments.

ITEM 5. NEW BUSINESS

**ITEM 5A. CONSIDER RES-
OLUTION APPROVING A
COOPERATIVE ENDEAV-
OR AGREEMENT BY AND
AMONG THE PORT OF
SOUTH LOUISIANA AND THE
PORT OF GREATER BATON
ROUGE AND RELATED MAT-
TERS**

A Motion was offered by Com-
missioner LeBlanc and second-
ed by Commissioner Hebert to
adopt that Resolution, which is
attached as Exhibit 5A. A dis-
cussion was had regarding the
Cooperative Endeavor Agree-
ment between the Port of South
Louisiana and the Port of Great-
er Baton Rouge. After discus-
sion, the Motion was called for a
vote, which was as follows:

YEAS Mr. Scontrino, Ms. Du-
mas, Mrs. Hebert, Mr. Murray,
Mr. Burks, Mr. Bazile, Mr. LeB-
lanc, Mr. Duhe, Mr. Joseph
NAYS None

ABSTAIN None

**ITEM 5B. CONSIDER RES-
OLUTION GIVING PRELIMI-
NARY APPROVAL TO THE IS-
SUANCE OF NOT EXCEEDING
(I) FOUR HUNDRED MILLION
DOLLARS (\$400,000,000) OF
REVENUE BONDS AND (II)
FORTY MILLION DOLLARS
(\$40,000,000) OF BOND AN-
TICIPATION NOTES OF THE
PORT OF SOUTH LOUISIANA
AND PROVIDING FOR OTHER
MATTERS IN CONNECTION
THEREWITH**

A Motion was offered by Com-
missioner Bazile and second-
ed by Commissioner Dumas to
adopt that Resolution, which
is attached as Exhibit 5B. Af-
ter discussion, the Motion was
called for a vote, which was as
follows:

YEAS Mr. Scontrino, Ms. Du-
mas, Mrs. Hebert, Mr. Murray,
Mr. Burks, Mr. Bazile, Mr. LeB-
lanc, Mr. Duhe, Mr. Joseph
NAYS None

ABSTAIN None
ABSENT None

**ITEM 5C. CONSIDER RESO-
LUTION PROVIDING FOR THE
EMPLOYMENT OF FOLEY
& JUDELL, L.L.P. AS SPE-
CIAL COUNSEL FOR LEGAL
WORK ON BEHALF OF THE
PORT OF SOUTH LOUISIANA
AND RELATED MATTERS**

A Motion was offered by Com-
missioner LeBlanc and second-
ed by Commissioner Hebert to
adopt that Resolution, which
is attached as Exhibit 5C. Af-
ter discussion, the Motion was
called for a vote, which was as
follows:

YEAS Mr. Scontrino, Ms. Du-
mas, Mrs. Hebert, Mr. Murray,
Mr. Burks, Mr. Bazile, Mr. LeB-
lanc, Mr. Duhe, Mr. Joseph
NAYS None

ABSTAIN None

**ITEM 5D. CONSIDER RESO-
LUTION FOR A COOPERA-
TIVE ENDEAVOR AGREE-
MENT OR MEMORANDUM OF
UNDERSTANDING OF THE
MARKETING AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE DEEPWATER
PORTS AND RELATED MAT-
TERS**

A Motion was offered by Com-
missioner Scontrino and second-
ed by Commissioner Duhe to
adopt that Resolution, which
is attached as Exhibit 5D. Af-
ter discussion, the Motion was
called for a vote, which was as
follows:

YEAS Mr. Scontrino, Ms. Du-
mas, Mrs. Hebert, Mr. Murray,
Mr. Burks, Mr. Bazile, Mr. LeB-
lanc, Mr. Duhe, Mr. Joseph
NAYS None

ABSTAIN None

**ITEM 5E. CONSIDER MAS-
TER SERVICES AGREEMENT
WITH DIGITAL ENGINEER-
ING AND IMAGING TASK OR-
DER FOR TRAFFIC IMPACT
STUDY AND RELATED MAT-
TERS**

Chairman Murray- Matter ta-
bled; needs further legal review.

**ITEM 8. AMEND AGENDA
TO ADD AN UPDATE FROM
PROJECT MANAGER WSP
REGARDING BUILDING 71**

A Motion was offered by Com-
missioner Scontrino and second-
ed by Commissioner Burks to
amend the agenda to add an
update from WSP. After discus-
sion, the Motion was called for a
vote, which was as follows:

YEAS Mr. Scontrino, Ms. Du-
mas, Mrs. Hebert, Mr. Murray,
Mr. Burks, Mr. Bazile, Mr. LeB-
lanc, Mr. Duhe, Mr. Joseph
NAYS None

ABSTAIN None

**ITEM 6A. UPDATE FROM
PROGRAM AND PROJECT
MANAGER WSP, USA, INC.
REGARDING BUILDING 71**

Port's Program and Project
Manager, WSP, USA Inc. updat-
ed the Commission on Building
71 project.

**ITEM 5F. EXECUTIVE SES-
SION:**

CCR 00680

Exhibit A

1) Pursuant to La. R.S. 42:17(A) (10) and in accordance with La. Atty. Gen. Op. No. 18-0144, the Commission shall receive from its legal counsel attorney client privileged communications as provided for by La. Code Evid. art. 506(B).
2) Pursuant to La. R.S. 42:17(A) (1), personnel matter.

A Motion was offered by Commissioner Hebert and seconded by Commissioner Duhe to enter Executive Session. Invitees: Attorneys: Peter Butler, Rachel Jeanfreau and Kayla Jacob. Time 4:31 p.m.

YEAS Mr. Scontrino, Ms. Dumas, Mrs. Hebert, Mr. Murray, Mr. Burks, Mr. Bazile, Mr. LeBlanc, Mr. Duhe, Mr. Joseph

NAYS None

ABSTAIN None

ABSENT None

Chairman Murray did not attend Executive Session.

A Motion was offered by Commissioner Joseph and seconded by Commissioner Dumas to exit Executive Session. Time 4:54 p.m.

YEAS Mr. Scontrino, Ms. Dumas, Mrs. Hebert, Mr. Murray, Mr. Burks, Mr. Bazile, Mr. LeBlanc, Mr. Duhe, Mr. Joseph

NAYS None

ABSTAIN None

ABSENT None

Vice Chairman Scontrino stated that no action was taken.

ITEM 5G. CONSIDERATION OF PERSONNEL MATTERS.

A Motion was offered by Commissioner Scontrino and seconded by Commissioner Duhe authorizing and directing the Port to accept the Resignation of Paul Matthews as Executive Director. The Motion was called for a vote, which was as follows:

YEAS Mr. Scontrino, Ms. Dumas, Mrs. Hebert, Mr. Burks, Mr. Bazile, Mr. LeBlanc, Mr. Duhe, Mr. Joseph

NAYS None

ABSTAIN Mr. Murray

ABSENT None

Chairman Murray stated on the record that the vote resulted in 8 Yeas and 1 Absention.

A Motion was offered by Commissioner Hebert and seconded by Commissioner Scontrino authorizing and directing the Port to name Brian Cox as its Interim Executive Director and that he assumes all the responsibility of the Executive Director including the authority to execute any documents, agreements, applications, checks and any and all official signatory items.

YEAS Mr. Scontrino, Ms. Dumas, Mrs. Hebert, Mr. Murray, Mr. Burks, Mr. Bazile, Mr. LeBlanc, Mr. Duhe, Mr. Joseph

NAYS None

ABSTAIN None

ABSENT None

7. ADJOURNMENT

A Motion was offered by Commissioner LeBlanc and seconded by Commissioner Dumas that the meeting be adjourned. 4:59 p.m.

YEAS Mr. Scontrino, Ms. Dumas, Mrs. Hebert, Mr. Murray, Mr. Burks, Mr. Bazile, Mr. LeBlanc, Mr. Duhe, Mr. Joseph

lanc, Mr. Duhe, Mr. Joseph

NAYS None

ABSTAIN None

ABSENT None

Stanley C. Bazile Secretary

P. Joey Murray, III Chairman

August 26, 2025

The cost of this notice is \$132.61.

L'Observateur:

Oct. 22, 2025

8.6.25 MINUTES

CCR 00681

NON-CERTIFIED COPY

The following resolution was offered by Com. Bazile, and second by Com. Dames:

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION GIVING PRELIMINARY APPROVAL TO THE ISSUANCE OF NOT EXCEEDING (I) FOUR HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS (\$400,000,000) OF REVENUE BONDS AND (II) FORTY MILLION DOLLARS (\$40,000,000) OF BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES OF THE PORT OF SOUTH LOUISIANA AND PROVIDING FOR OTHER MATTERS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH.

WHEREAS, Chapter 30 of Title 34 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, as amended, and other applicable constitutional and statutory authority (the "*Port Act*") authorizes the Port of South Louisiana (the "*Port*") to issue its revenue bonds, which revenue bonds shall be solely the obligations of the Port, entitled to such priorities on the income, revenue, and receipts of the Port as shall be provided; and

WHEREAS, Section 1430 of Title 34 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, as amended, and other applicable constitutional and statutory authority (the "*Revenue Bond Act*" and together with the Port Act, the "*Act*") authorizes public entities such as the Port to issue its revenue bonds for any authorized purpose payable out of the income, revenues, and receipts derived or to be derived from the properties and facilities owned, maintained or operated by the Port or received by the Port from these properties and facilities, or from contracts or agreements relating to these properties and facilities, including but not limited to lease or sublease agreements or other financing agreements, between the Port or any other public or private entity; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the Port of South Louisiana (the "*Board of Commissioners*"), in its capacity as governing authority of the Port, desires to give preliminary approval of the issuance of not exceeding \$400,000,000 of Port Facility Revenue Bonds (the "*Bonds*"), in one or more series on a tax-exempt or taxable basis, pursuant to the Act, for the

Exhibit B

CRR 0101

purpose of (i) acquiring, improving, equipping, and furnishing the Project described herein, (ii) funding debt service, capitalized interest, and other reserves, if required, and (iii) paying costs of issuance of the Bonds; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the authority of Chapter 14-B of Title 39 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, as amended and other constitutional and statutory authority (the "*Note Act*"), this Board of Commissioners further proposes to issue not exceeding \$40,000,000 of Bond Anticipation Notes of the Port (the "*Notes*"), in one or more series on a tax-exempt or taxable basis, to provide interim financing prior to and during the construction of the Project described herein;

WHEREAS, the Bonds and Notes shall be secured as set forth herein; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners now wishes to apply to the State Bond Commission to obtain its approval for the issuance of the Bonds and employ professionals in connection therewith;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Port of South Louisiana, acting as the governing authority of the Port, that:

SECTION 1. Preliminary approval is hereby given to the issuance, sale and delivery of the Bonds described in the preamble hereto. The Bonds shall be issued for the purpose of (i) acquiring, constructing, improving, equipping, and furnishing facilities of the Port consisting of a dock, wharfage, conveyor belt, and other facilities used or useful in connection with one or more heavy manufacturing industrial facilities (collectively, the "*Project*"), (ii) funding debt service, capitalized interest, and other reserves, if required, and (iii) paying costs of issuance of the Bonds. The Bonds will mature no later than forty (40) years from the date thereof and will bear interest at a rate or rates not exceeding a fixed rate of nine per centum (9%) per annum or a variable rate of

CRR 0102

twelve per centum (12%) per annum. The Bonds may be issued in one or more series, each of which may be taxable or tax-exempt, and shall be secured by and payable solely out of the income, revenues, and receipts realized by the Port from the ownership or operation of the Project. The Bonds may be issued in one or more series, each of which may be taxable or tax-exempt; if issued in multiple series, the Port shall be authorized to assign any such series of the Bonds a lower priority on said income, revenues, and receipts of the Project than it assigns any other series of the Bonds. The Port may elect to pay debt service on the Bonds with other available funds if it determines in its sole discretion that it is advisable to do so. The Bonds may be additionally secured by a mortgage on all or any part of the Project.

SECTION 2. Application is further made to the State Bond Commission, for approval of the issuance of not exceeding \$40,000,000 of Bond Anticipation Notes, to provide interim financing during the construction of the Project. The Notes shall be issued in one or more series on a tax-exempt or taxable basis, shall mature over a period not to exceed twelve (12) months from the date thereof, and shall bear interest at a rate or rates not to exceed nine percent (9%) per annum. The Notes will be secured by a pledge of and payable solely from the proceeds of the Bonds and the revenues pledged as security for the Bonds.

SECTION 3. THE BONDS AND THE NOTES SHALL BE LIMITED AND SPECIAL OBLIGATIONS OF THE PORT AND SHALL NOT CONSTITUTE OR CREATE AN OBLIGATION, GENERAL OR SPECIAL, DEBT, LIABILITY OR MORAL OBLIGATION OF THE STATE OR ANY OTHER POLITICAL SUBDIVISION THEREOF, OTHER THAN THE PORT, WITHIN THE MEANING OF ANY CONSTITUTIONAL OR STATUTORY PROVISIONS WHATSOEVER, AND NEITHER THE FAITH OR CREDIT NOR THE TAXING POWER OF THE STATE OR OF ANY OTHER POLITICAL SUBDIVISION

CRR 0103

THEREOF IS PLEDGED TO THE PAYMENT OF THE PRINCIPAL OF OR THE INTEREST ON THE BONDS AND THE NOTES. THE BONDS AND THE NOTES ARE NOT A GENERAL OBLIGATION OF THE PORT BUT ARE A LIMITED AND SPECIAL REVENUE OBLIGATION OF THE PORT PAYABLE SOLELY FROM THE INCOME, REVENUES AND RECEIPTS PLEDGED HEREIN.

SECTION 4. A certified copy of this resolution and other application materials shall be forwarded to the Louisiana State Bond Commission, together with a request for the prompt consideration and approval of this application.

By virtue of applicant/issuer's application for, acceptance and utilization of the benefits of the Louisiana State Bond Commission's approval(s) resolved and set forth herein, it resolves that it understands and agrees that such approval(s) are expressly conditioned upon, and it further resolves that it understands, agrees and binds itself, its successors and assigns to, full and continuing compliance with the "*State Bond Commission Policy on Approval of Proposed Use of Swaps, or other forms of Derivative Products Hedges, Etc.*", adopted by the Commission on July 20, 2006, as to the borrowing(s) and other matter(s) subject to the approval(s), including subsequent application and approval under said Policy of the implementation or use of any swap(s) or other product(s) or enhancement(s) covered thereby.

SECTION 5. This Board of Commissioners finds and determines that a real necessity exists for the employment of special counsel in connection with the issuance of the Bonds and Notes, and accordingly, Foley & Judell, L.L.P., of New Orleans, Louisiana, as Bond Counsel, is hereby employed to do and perform work of a traditional legal nature as bond counsel with respect to the issuance and sale of said Bonds and Notes. Said Bond Counsel shall prepare and submit to this Board of Commissioners for adoption all of the proceedings incidental to the authorization,

CRR 0104

issuance, sale and delivery of such Bonds and Notes, shall counsel and advise this Board of Commissioners as to the issuance and sale thereof and shall furnish its opinions covering the legality of the issuance of the Bonds and Notes. The fee of Bond Counsel for each series of Bonds or Notes shall be fixed at a sum not exceeding the fee allowed by the Attorney General's fee guidelines for such bond counsel work and based on the amount of said Bonds or Notes actually issued, sold, delivered and paid for, plus "*out-of-pocket*" expenses, said fees to be contingent upon the issuance, sale and delivery of said Bonds or Notes. The Executive Director of the Port is hereby authorized and directed to execute, and this Board of Commissioners hereby agrees to and accepts the terms of, the engagement letter of Bond Counsel appended hereto. A certified copy of this resolution shall be submitted to the Attorney General of the State of Louisiana for approval of said employment and of the fees herein designated, and the Executive Director and/or Chief Administrative Officer of the Port are hereby empowered and directed to provide for payment of the work herein specified from the proceeds of the Bonds or Notes, as applicable, upon completion thereof and under the conditions herein enumerated without further approval of this Board of Commissioners.

SECTION 6. The Port hereby retains Government Consultants, Inc., of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, to act as its Municipal Advisor ("*MA*") pursuant to the provisions of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act and the rules promulgated thereunder by the Securities and Exchange Commission. The Port hereby acknowledges that it is represented by the MA and will rely upon the advice of the MA with respect to the Bonds and Notes. The fee to be paid the MA shall be payable solely from the proceeds of the Bonds or Notes when and if issued, and the amount thereof shall be subject to the approval of the State Bond Commission. The

CRR 0105

Executive Director of the Port is hereby authorized and directed, in his discretion, to execute any contract the MA may require with respect to the engagement.

SECTION 7. Wells Fargo Securities, LLC, is hereby appointed as placement agent/underwriter in connection with the Bonds and Notes, any compensation to be subsequently approved by the Port and to be paid from the proceeds of the Bonds or Notes and contingent upon the issuance of the Bonds or Notes; provided that no compensation shall be due to said placement agent/underwriter unless the Bonds or Notes are actually sold and delivered.

SECTION 8. Prior to the delivery of the Bonds, the Port presently intends and reasonably expects that it may pay all or a portion of the costs of the Project from legally available funds in its General Fund. Upon the issuance of the Bonds, the Port presently intends and reasonably expects to reimburse any such expenditures for the Project from a portion of the proceeds of the Bonds, provided that such reimbursement shall be in an amount not currently reasonably expected to exceed the maximum principal amount of the Bonds set forth in Section 1 hereof. Any such allocation of proceeds of the Bonds for reimbursement will be with respect to capital expenditures (as defined in Reg. 1.150-1(b)) and will be made not later than 18 months after the later of (i) the date such expenditure was paid or (ii) the date on which the Project was placed in service or abandoned, but in no event more than three years after the original expenditure is paid. This Section is intended to be a declaration of official intent within the meaning of Reg. 1.150-2, and certain terms used in this Section shall have the meaning given in such Regulation. For purposes of this Section, the Project includes acquiring, constructing, improving, equipping, and furnishing facilities of the Port consisting of a dock, wharfage, conveyor belt, and other facilities used or useful in connection with one or more heavy manufacturing industrial facilities. All of the expenditures covered by this Section were or will be made on and after the date which is 60 days

CRR 0106

prior to the effective date of this Resolution or as otherwise allowed by Reg. 1.150-2 which includes, among other things, an exception for "preliminary expenditures" as defined therein.

This resolution having been submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

COMMISSIONERS	YEAS	NAYS	ABSENT	ABSTAINING
P. Joey Murray, III	X			
Joey Scontrino	X			
Robbie LeBlanc	X			
Stanley C. Bazile	X			
Ryan Burks	X			
Louis Joseph	X			
Jason Duha'	X			
Florence Dumas	X			
Julie Hebert	X			

And the resolution was declared adopted on this, the 5th day of August, 2025.

/s/ Stanley C. Bazille
Secretary

/s/ P. Joey Murray, III
Chairman

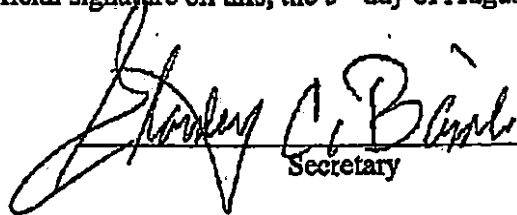
CRR 0107

STATE OF LOUISIANA

PARISH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

I, the undersigned Secretary of the Board of Commissioners of Port of South Louisiana (the "*Board of Commissioners*"), acting as the governing authority of Port of South Louisiana (the "*Port*") do hereby certify that the foregoing pages constitute a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Board of Commissioners on August 5, 2025, giving preliminary approval to the issuance of not exceeding (i) Four Hundred Million Dollars (\$400,000,000) of Revenue Bonds and (ii) Four Hundred Million Dollars (\$400,000,000) of Bond Anticipation Notes to finance capital improvements of Port Facility Revenue Bonds of the Port of South Louisiana, and providing for other matters in connection therewith..

IN FAITH WHEREOF, witness my official signature on this, the 5th day of August, 2025.


Secretary

CRR 0108

NON-CERTIFIED COPY

Exhibit C

NON-CERTIFIED COPY



UNWANTED PEST acting like a guest

CALL TERMINIX (885) 852-7378

SOUTHSHORE • NORTHSORE • RIVER PARISHES

L'OBSERVATEUR

Thousands gather at St John the Baptist Parish for 50th Andouille Festival celebration

By Amos Abba
The L'Observateur

Thousands of residents and visitors gathered at Thomas F. Daley Memorial Park in Laplace, St. John the Baptist Parish, for the three-day celebration of the 50th Andouille Festival last weekend.

The 50th Andouille Festival celebrated St. John the Baptist Parish's rich culinary heritage and the tradition of local sausage makers who have produced andouille for generations. Organized by Parish President Jaclyn Hotard, the event featured live performances, gospel stage music, food and drinks, arts and crafts, children's activities, and royalty.

For the first time, the annual Andouille Run/Walk drew 200 participants, marking its largest turnout in the event's history. "This year's Andouille

Festival was truly one for the record books," said President Hotard. "From the incredible turnout to the amazing food, entertainment, and family fun, our community showed exactly what makes St. John Parish so special."

And this year, over two dozen food vendors served both local cuisines and sweets. The sunny weather didn't stop crowds from flocking to vendor booths during the festival, which sold everything from andouille sausage BBQ, chicken stacks, spicy sausage, and cowboy sundaes.

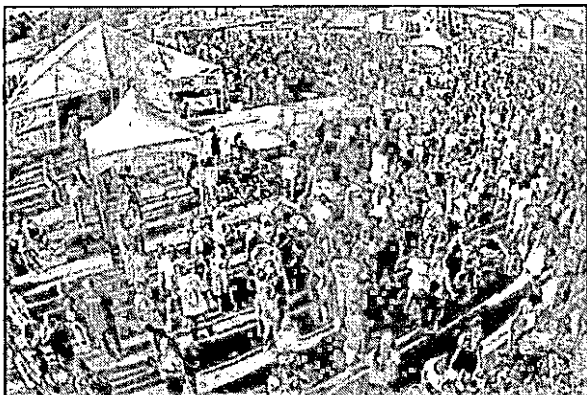
But despite how much it has grown over the years, the core of the festival has remained the same, revolving around food and music, bolstering the essence of St. John's Parish culture while staying slightly attuned to the pulse.

This year's milestone celebration was

driven by a stacked performance schedule featuring local favorites, brass bands, and national acts. Music headliners include Amanda Shaw, the Cute Guys, Shot Time, Hot 8 Brass Band, and the Phunky Monkeys. Other

Also, attendees sang along to some of Taylor Swift's biggest hits like "Shake It Off," "Love Story," "Blank Space," and more during the festival. Presented by Marathon Petroleum, the festival's gospel lineup on Sunday, October 19, brought together local churches, choirs, and solo performers for an afternoon of music and spiritual reflection.

Pastor Juan Adams performed alongside the house band, followed by From My Heart to Yours Church. The Tchoupitoulas Chapel Community Choir and New Jerusalem Baptist Church added lush har-



Thousands of residents and visitors gathered at Thomas F. Daley Memorial Park in Laplace for the 50th Andouille Festival.

monies, showcasing the region's rich musical traditions. Soloists and groups, including Trent Gaddison, Destiny Christian Center, and Arthur Clayton with Anointed for Purpose, performed before culminating in the headlining set, "Arthur and Friends."

President Hotard also expressed appreciation to all those who made the festival possible. "Thank you to our vendors, sponsors, performers, volunteers, and Parish staff who worked tirelessly to ensure this milestone year was safe, successful, and memorable for everyone," she said. "This festival continues to unite our community year after year — and the 50th anniversary was no exception. It was a beautiful reminder of our people, our pride, and our progress."

SEE CELEBRATION 3A

Louisiana is set to slash testing for high schoolers. What it means for students in St. John the Baptist Parish

By Amos Abba
The L'Observateur

Starting in 2026, high school students in St. John the Baptist Parish school district will take one comprehensive math test and one English test, instead of two tests in each subject, according to officials from the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). The current civics and biology tests will continue, totaling four state tests instead of six.

For students entering ninth grade in the 2026-2027 school year, Louisiana high schools will adopt a comprehensive exam model for English language arts and math. Students will take one end-of-course exam in each subject at the end of 10th grade rather than two separate tests.

The changes won't affect Louisiana's graduation requirements, which require high school students to pass three state exams, but they will reduce the mandatory testing. Currently, students are required to take English I and II, Algebra I and Geometry, Biology, and Civics.

"This surgical approach reduces testing while maintaining the validity and rigor of these vital assessments," said Louisiana Superintendent of Education Dr. Cade Brumley. "It shows we can listen to our educators, improve the system, and uphold high expectations."

The shift aligns with new Louisiana Student Standards for ELA and math and is part of a broader effort by the Louisiana Department of

Education to streamline state assessments.

Over the past year, the state has already reduced testing time for grades 3-8 in English and math by 20% and cut social studies testing in half for those same grades. Officials are also considering possible reductions in science assessments.

State education leaders said the goal is to reduce testing time while maintaining accountability and academic rigor. The changes will also help districts like St. John the Baptist Parish Public Schools focus more classroom time on teaching rather than test preparation.

State assessments remain a key tool for measuring student progress and identifying areas where schools can provide additional support.



From (left to right) Deputy Mike Coburn, Sgt. Albermarle Harris, Captain Jared Saruntino, Sheriff Mike Tregre, Lt. Darlene Cooper, and Sgt. Ira Marshall. Credit: SJDP&O

St. John Sheriff's Office hosts "Teens and Traffic Stops" course at West St. John High

By Amos Abba
The L'Observateur

Officers from the St. John the Baptist Parish Sheriff's Office are teaching local high school students how to stay safe during traffic stops through a new educational program launched by Sheriff Mike Tregre.

The one-hour "Teens and Traffic Stops" course was recently held at West St. John High School, where juniors and seniors learned what to expect if they are pulled over and how to interact safely with law enforcement officers.

"One of the most important things in life is survival," Tregre told students. "A lot of things that happen in law enforcement start and end with traffic stops. The information you learn today will help you get through a traffic stop anywhere in the country."

The session was divided into two parts: a classroom segment focused on safe driving practices and a hands-on portion in the school parking lot, where

students participated in mock traffic stops as "drivers."

Officers emphasized the importance of cooperation and communication during traffic encounters. Students were advised always to present their driver's license and name when asked and to stay calm and respectful.

"Just sign the ticket," Tregre told the class. "I've been stopped. My family's been stopped." He reminded students that signing a cita-

DCE Secretary Davidson says Louisiana is central to energy dominance policies

By Alton Wallace
The Center Square

Louisiana a Department of Conservation and Energy Secretary Dustin Davidson said communities will grow in unexpected ways because of states' central role in America's push to energy dominance.

"Within the last year, we have had roughly \$70 billion of capital expenditures announced in Louisiana - that's unheard of in a lot of states," Davidson said in a Thursday address at the Louisiana Energy Summit in New Orleans host-

ed by the American Council for Capital Formation.

"Small Louisiana has always been able to punch above our weight and be able to deliver needs to the world and to the nation in ways that other states cannot, so I think it's important that we think about the fact that we are going to be growing in ways that we never expected before. As we start to develop and grow a little bit more, we need to be focused on how we are going protect our resources and how we can be partners in protecting those resources," said Davidson.

Davidson, appoint-

ed by Gov. Jeff Landry in September 2025, is overseeing a reorganization of the Department of Conservation and Energy aimed at reducing bureaucratic hurdles while also adapting to modern industrial technologies.

"We took the opportunity to eliminate some of the duplicative functions that we had in the department," he said. "Now we have one permitting office - a permitting office that handles coastal use permits, oil and gas permits, carbon capture permits, and any other permits that we issue. The department

now has an enforcement office, ready to enforce the laws on the books, and an Office of Energy that is being expanded to mirror the federal Office of Energy," said Davidson.

Davidson said the Department of Conservation and Energy, formerly the Department of Energy and Natural Resources, has been "reactive" in the management of oil and gas and water resources for years, in part because of outdated statutes on the books since the early 1900s. Additionally, the department had not been restructured since 1976, Davidson

noted.

"We've taken the steps as a Department of Conservation and Energy to work closely with Louisiana Economic Development to make sure that any new business they are recruiting to the state is communicated to us, and that we can identify those permits on the front end so that there's no lag or no delay in delivering those projects to communities - projects like we see in Richland, Louisiana with Meta or like we see with other businesses that will be coming to the state," said Davidson.

"As we look forward

to the development of new technologies - and permitting projects around the state - we want make sure that we're working with the applicants to make sure they know that they need to get out and partner with the community," Davidson said.

Davidson said the oil and gas industry would benefit from a lower severance tax. "We've taken that approach to make sure that we can bring in new developers and help out some of the existing developers that are looking for new plays throughout the state," he said.

Gaza man in Louisiana arrested by federal task force

By Nolan McKendry
The Center Square

Federal agents have arrested a Gaza man living in Louisiana, saying he lied to obtain a visa in the United States after having taken part in the Oct. 7, 2023, attack by Hamas on Israel.

U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi said Mahmoud Amin Ya'qub Al-Muhtadi of Lafayette "has been found and charged with participating in the atrocities of October 7 - the single deadliest day for Jewish people since the Holocaust," adding that the Justice Department's Joint Task Force October 7 "is dedicated to finding and prosecuting those responsible ... including the murder of dozens of American citizens."

Assistant Attorney General for National Security John A. Eisenberg said court filings describe Al-Muhtadi arming himself, recruiting others and entering Israel after learning of the assault.

Investigators say his phone connected to a cell tower near Kibbutz Kfar Aza, where many civilians - including at least four Americans - were killed.

"This arrest is the first public step in bringing to justice those responsible for

harming Americans on that day," Eisenberg said.

U.S. Attorney Zachary A. Keller for the Western District of Louisiana called the case a reminder that "those who perpetrate acts of terrorism cannot evade justice by hiding in our communities," crediting a coalition of federal, state and local agencies - including the FBI, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Louisiana State Police, Lafayette Police Department and Lafayette Parish Sheriff's Office - with assisting the investigation.

According to a criminal complaint, prosecutors say Al-Muhtadi is an operative for the National Resistance Brigades. That's the military wing of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a Gaza-based paramilitary group that participated in the attack.

Prosecutors say he later secured entry to the United States by concealing ties to armed groups, training and involvement in the assault on his visa application. Department of Homeland Security records show he entered the country Sept. 12, 2024, and has been working and residing in Lafayette.

An affidavit states Al-Muhtadi met with a consular officer at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo on Aug.

6, 2024, took an oath, provided fingerprints and photographs, and indicated plans to settle in Tulsa, Okla., to work in car repair or food service. Investigators say they later obtained the fingerprint records noted by the consular officer.

The case is being led by Joint Task Force October 7 and the FBI's New Orleans Field Office with assistance from Israeli authorities, including the State Attorney's Office of Israel, the Israeli Security Agency, Lahav 433, the Israel National Police, the Israel Defense Forces and the Israeli National Bureau for Counter Terror Financing, as well as the FBI's legal attaché in Israel.

The Louisiana State Police, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Lafayette Police and the Lafayette Parish Sheriff's Office also contributed.

The task force was established in February 2025 by Bondi to investigate perpetrators of the Oct. 7 attack, in which about 1,200 people were killed by Hamas, including 49 U.S. citizens, and roughly 250 were abducted, including eight Americans. Israel retaliated and the number of dead is now believed to exceed 68,000.

Juvenile detention numbers rise in Caddo Parish

By Emilio Calametti
The Center Square

After a period of continuous downward trending juvenile detention numbers, an update shows nine more juveniles in detention than the previous report on Oct. 9.

According to Chief Administrative Officer Erica Bryant, 24 juveniles are in detention, eight are with the Office of Juvenile Justice, 13 are at the Caddo Correctional Center, and there are 428 probation cases. Previously, there were 13 individuals in detention, six of whom were with the Office of Juvenile Justice, 15 at the Caddo Correctional Center, and 423 probation cases.

Each statistic is slightly higher after two weeks, with Bryant noting the correctional center is officially over capacity. The Caddo Correctional Center, with a capacity of

1,500, has a current population of 1,560.

Bryant and Caddo Commission President Stormy Gage Watts have met with the district attorney, the District Court, the Police Department, the Sheriff's Office, and the public defender to discuss the unsustainable nature of the current correctional center capacity.

"We used to think that if we got to 1,600 that was something we could manage, and now we are well over 1,500," said Bryant to the commission.

In June of this year, the total reported population at the correctional center was 1,493, and 1,158 were pretrial detainees. In May, capacity stood at approximately 1,498.

The correctional center has been at or very close to capacity for many months, as the parish and administration continue to discuss ways to improve the situation.

TRAFFIC from 1A

tion is not an admission of guilt but simply an acknowledgment of receipt.

Sheriff Tregre was joined by Captain Jared Seruntine, assistant commander of the Uniformed Patrol Unit; Lt. Darlene Cooper, School Resource Officer commander; Sgt. Albernae Harris and Sgt. Ira Marsalis of the Traffic Division, and Deputy Monisha Dampier, the school's resource officer. Members of the Community Relations team, including Lt. Ricardo Colas and Deputies Mike Coburn and Anita Haley, also participated.

West St. John High

School Principal J. Vincent Brown thanked the Sheriff's Office for bringing the program to his students.

"Many of you are now in that driving force, and many of you are of age to be dealt with legally," Brown told the students. "So, we want you to be well informed and understand."

The "Teens and Traffic Stops" program is part of the Sheriff's Office's ongoing community outreach efforts to strengthen relationships between young drivers and law enforcement while promoting roadway safety.

SAVE \$160

12 TOP WINES

ONLY \$79.99

+ BONUS GIFTS

OMAHA STEAKS WINE

Powered by Lalliwalters



Go to GetOSWine.com/Sip136
or call 1.888.885.2306 and mention code AGIF002

Omaha Steaks Wine is operated independently from Omaha Steaks, LLC. Full terms and conditions apply. Offer while supplies last.

SAVE \$350 when you transform your patio into an outdoor oasis



SunSetter
America's #1 Heating

- Instant shade - at the touch of a button.
- Enjoy more quality time with family and friends.
- Up to 10-Year Limited Warranty.

Call 1-844-811-0359 now to **SAVE \$350 TODAY!**

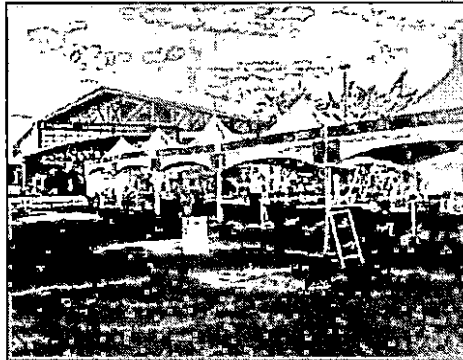
America's #1 Heating

CELEBRATION

from 1A



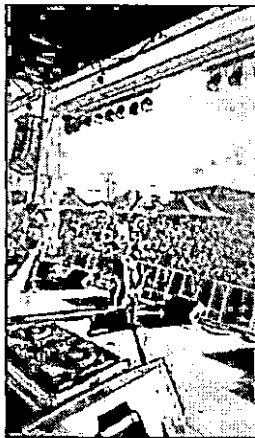
Andouille Queens



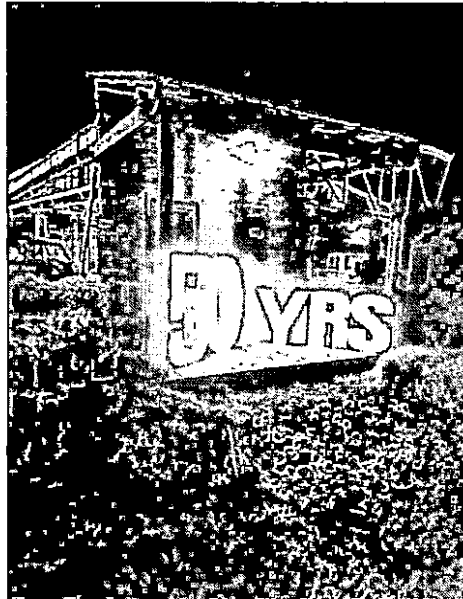
Booths for food vendors during the festival



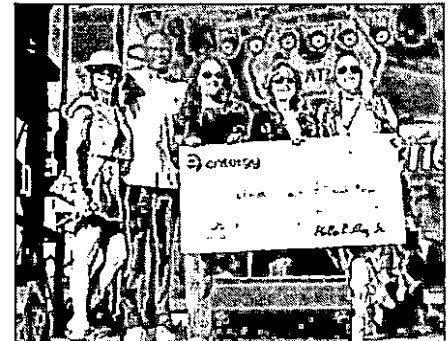
The night sight during the 50th Andouille festival



Juvenile performance at the 50th Andouille festival



The 50th Andouille festival celebration



St John the Baptist Parish President Jaclyn Hotard with dummy check from Entergy



The 5k run/walk during the 50th Andouille festival

Update on Historic Louisiana Congressional Redistricting Case

By Royal Alexander

The Louisiana-based congressional redistricting case, *Collais v. Louisiana*, was argued for a second time this past Wednesday at the U.S. Supreme Court. It is always interesting to me when Louisiana has a case before the Supreme Court.

The case was first argued in March and centered on whether Louisiana's 2024 congressional map—which added a second majority-Black district—amounts to an unconstitutional racial gerrymander. The outcome could determine how states nationwide apply the Voting Rights Act (VRA) in future redistricting cycles. The Court delayed ruling and ordered the parties to submit new legal briefs addressing whether Louisiana's creation of a second majority-Black congressional district under Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) violates the 14th Amendment (equal protection) or 15th Amendment (the right to vote may not be prohibited based on race) to the Constitution.

Although the questions the Justices ask during oral argument may very well not be indicative of how they ultimately rule in a case, I still find their questions insightful.

Justice Brett Kavanaugh's questions indicated that the 1965 Voting Rights law may not have been intended to last forever and, instead, "sunset" at some point. Justice Amy Coney Barrett's questions reflected the same concern. Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson interjected that because the VRA is derived from the 15th Amendment, "it does not have a time limit." It was an interesting point, although I don't think it is legally correct.

Louisiana's Solicitor General, Ben Aguirre, arguing for Louisiana, urged the Supreme Court to prohibit the use of race as a factor in redistricting. "We are 50 years removed" from the original use of these race-based factors, he argued, and they "have placed states in impossible situations,

where the only sure (thing) is more racial discrimination for more decades." He contended that the racial considerations required under VRA are tantamount to a system of "government-mandated racial balancing" and urged them to be rejected outright.

He then took some sharp questioning from Justice Jackson who asked him whether, in Louisiana's view, identifying and remedying racial discrimination is a "compelling interest." "If I'm right that Section 2 is about identifying the problem and requiring some remedy, I don't understand why your answer to Justice Kagan's question about, 'Is this a compelling state interest,' would be 'no,'" Jackson said. "The answer is obviously yes," Jackson said. "You have an interest in remedying the effects of racial discrimination that we identify using this tool. Whether you go too far in your remedy is another issue." Justice Jackson then confounded me when she seemed to suggest that being a minority voter was similar to being disabled under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

In defending the Louisiana law and map as she is required to do, Louisiana Attorney General Liz Murrill originally argued that the map adding the 2nd minority district could stand legal muster. However, when the Supreme Court requested that the parties address specifically how the 14th and 15th Amendments affect the VRA, the state took the position that race-based redistricting is unconstitutional.

This rehearing indicates to me that the Court wants to take another look at the potential inconsistency that exists between the Voting Rights Act

(VRA) and the 14th Amendment's prohibition of racial gerrymandering.

The Equal Protection Clause in the 14th Amendment of our Constitution requires that our laws apply equally to everyone and prevents governments from discriminating against different groups, particularly based upon their race. However, Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, which was designed to enforce the 15th Amendment—which guarantees the right to vote regardless of race or color—prohibits voting practices that result in the denial or abridgement of the right to vote on account of race. This includes practices that "dilute" minority voting strength.

These two legal principles are directly in conflict. The Voting Rights Act (VRA) is a statute, and no statute trumps the Constitution so the VRA could fall to the constitutional mandate of equal protection in the 14th Amendment. If the VRA is struck down, redistricting across the nation will be affected.

The Supreme Court should confirm the Constitution's guarantee of equal protection and end the Voting Rights Act requirement of racial discrimination. This would honor and adhere to the principle inherent in Dr. Martin Luther King's "dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character ..."

Total Choice
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
Serving our *First Community*

WE ARE A FULL SERVICE CREDIT UNION

- SAVINGS/CHECKING ACCOUNTS
- LOANS
- CREDIT CARDS

CALL US
VISIT US ONLINE
1-800-ALCOHOL-1000

FIRST NATIONAL BANK • U • S • A •

First National Bank USA
377 Belle Terre Blvd., LaPlace, Louisiana

Now accepting applications for position of:
Loan Operations & Loan Processing
Electronic Banking Specialist
Executive Assistants
Lobby Personnel
Willing to Train

Please send resumes to: info@fnbusa.com
www.fnbusa.com / (985) 785-8411

"The SPEED of REV INTERNET is OUTSTANDING."
Duke G. - REV Customer

**FIVE STAR
★★★★★
HIGH-SPEED
INTERNET**

866-637-0697
letsrev.com

INTERNET | TV | PHONE | SECURITY

Opinion

PAGE 4A

[L'OBSERVATEUR]

Op-Ed: Keep Louisiana affordable by protecting Medicare

By D. Paul Robichaux

As a business leader in Louisiana, I can't stress enough about the importance of ensuring affordability. People are leaving the Pelican State - we are suffering from population loss. This is happening for many reasons, but affordability is a top concern.

Which is why I want to talk about an essential federal program for seniors. Home health, a Medicare benefit that is overwhelmingly popular among patients and families, enables people to grow older with dignity in the setting they prefer.

This program is important, especially in Louisiana, where we have a lot of older folks and many of them aren't wealthy enough to afford to pay for at-home care out of pocket.

Something else to keep in mind is that allowing older adults and Americans with disabilities to recover in their own homes after a hospital stay has the potential to save taxpayers \$1.3 billion annually.

Despite these benefits, Washington is threatening to undermine this care option.

Earlier this year, the federal government proposed a troubling 9% cut to Medicare home health payments. If these cuts move forward, Louisiana's seniors and patients with disabilities will pay the price.

Already, America's seniors are feeling the damage that years of underfunding have done to home healthcare. In the past 6 years,

more than 1,000 home health agencies nationwide have closed their doors, depriving rural communities of care options. As a result, more than one-third of patients referred for home health after leaving the hospital never receive it.

That's not because they opted out of it. It's because there weren't enough resources to go around. We need to be strengthening access to home health, not paring it back.

Here in Louisiana, 14 home health agencies have shut down since 2019, and more than 34,000 patients have lost access to care they should have received. That's thousands of hard-working families forced to remain in the hospital longer than they need to, or being moved into higher-cost nursing facilities when home health would be more appropriate.

In rural parishes, where hospitals and clinics are already stretched thin, these proposed new cuts will only further reduce competition, close small businesses, and threaten access to care.

This is bad news for patients and taxpayers alike. Research shows that when patients don't receive home health, hospital readmissions rise significantly (35%), as do emergency room visits (16%), which are bad for patients and draining for Medicare's coffers. Most troubling, mortality rates increase by an astonishing 43% when patients can't access the home health care they need.

Perhaps most disappointing

is that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services are basing these cuts on Medicare reporting data that includes a few bad actor "outliers" who have engaged in fraud and abuse. Instead of cracking down on those criminals, the federal government is using a methodology based on this flawed data to justify payment cuts across the board.

If policymakers want to protect the Medicare trust fund, the answer is obvious: target fraud, waste, and abuse directly. Don't slash payments in ways that limit care for seniors who did nothing wrong.

President Trump has repeatedly pledged to protect Medicare, and I encourage the administration and other policymakers in Washington to keep this promise.

If Medicare doesn't reverse course, then Congress must pass the Home Health Stabilization Act of 2025, which would pause the cuts for two years. This pause would allow lawmakers to clean up flawed data, fix Medicare's payment formula, and implement lasting reforms that strengthen home health care.

For the sake of patients and our healthcare system, Medicare home health must be protected. Louisiana's seniors deserve no less, and it is essential to help ensure people can continue to afford to live in our state.

D. Paul Robichaux served seven terms as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Port of South Louisiana, the largest port by tonnage in the state.

Feeling stressed and need supernatural help?

By Sheryl (Hamilton)

Boldt

Special to the L'Observateur



Sheryl Boldt

Mr. Thomas cleared his throat. "I'm sorry to have to do this, Ellen, but I don't have a choice."

Don't say it. Please, don't say it! Ellen thought. She gripped the chair's armrests as she sat across from her boss.

"There've been a lot of budget cutbacks." He looked down, fidgeted with papers on his desk, and cleared his throat again. "I'm going to have to let you go."

In this fictional story, how do you envision Ellen handling this unexpected crisis? How would you respond to this - or an equally stressful event?

Do you think Ellen's (or your) response would be influenced by whether she (you) had been spending regular time with God?

Even when I have regular quiet times, I don't always respond to difficulty the way I wish I would. But as I resolve to pray and read my Bible every day, my relationship with my heavenly Father grows deeper, and I have less anxiety in life's stressors.

Why do I talk so often about spending regular time with God? For three main reasons.

First, we never know what our future holds. Even a moment from now, our lives could change in dramatic ways. Second, we need strength and comfort when we're struggling and counsel when we're confused. Third, even in the good seasons, getting to know our Father more intimately will only enhance our lives and our relationships.

There's no downside to pursuing God. He

loves us more than anyone else ever could or will. He knows everything about us and our future. And He, Almighty God, longs to spend time with us!

Read Psalm 27:8 (ESV) and let these words shape your mindset: "You have said, 'Seek my face.' My heart says to you, 'Your face, Lord, do I seek.'"

What stressful events are you facing today? How are your responses to these events influenced by the time you spend (or don't spend) with God?

Life is hard enough. With all the chaos the world throws at us, I cringe to think about how overwhelming it would be if we didn't seek God's presence in prayer and in His Word.

Beginning today, choose to seek God's face. Seek Him earnestly in your heart, beyond just seeking answers to your prayers. Try this for one full month and see how it transforms the way you handle life's stresses.

Even better, watch how much more you fall in love with - and reverse - Almighty God.

Sheryl (Hamilton) Boldt is a faith columnist and the author of the blog, www.TodayCanBeDifferent.net. Connect with her at SherylHBoldt@gmail.com.

L'OBSERVATEUR
Best of the Pelican State

David Singleton
Regional General Manager
david.singleton@lpcjournal.com
Amos Abba
Community Reporter
amos.abba@lpcjournal.com

SUBSCRIBE

In-Parish Mail: \$5.00 per year
Out-of-Parish Mail: \$15.00 per year
Inquire for rates if mailing outside the United States.
Single copy: \$1.50

L'Observateur (USPS-298-840) is published on Wednesday by L'Observateur, 116 Newspaper Drive, LaPlace, LA 70068. Second class postage paid at LaPlace and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: send address changes to L'Observateur, 116 Newspaper Drive, LaPlace, LA 70068. OFFICE HOURS 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. TELEPHONE: (985) 652-9545 FAX: (985) 652-1633 www.lpcjournal.com

COLUMNS & LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

L'OBSERVATEUR welcomes letters to the editor and column submissions. They must be signed and include name, address and telephone number (which will not be published).

Submissions do not necessarily reflect the opinions of L'OBSERVATEUR or its parent companies, staff, vendors or advertisers.

Names will not be withheld. Any writers representing a group will include their title and the organization for publication. No more than three signatures will be printed.

Letters to the editor will not exceed 300 words (one typed double-spaced page) and will address a particular idea. Letters about political candidates will not be considered. L'OBSERVATEUR reserves the right to reject any letter to the editor or the edit submissions for length and readability.

By email: loraljuquet@lpcjournal.com

By mail or in person: 116 Newspaper Drive, LaPlace, behind Destiny Christian Center

LOUISIANA STATEWIDE CLASSIFIEDS

Advertising

Looking to promote your services or find a new hire? Deliver your classified message statewide for as little as \$265 per week through the Louisiana Press Association's Classified Network. Pre-payment required. To learn more, email advertising@lpcjournal.com or call 225-344-9309.

Miscellaneous

We Buy Houses for Cash AS-IS! No repairs. No fuss. Any condition. Easy process: Call, get cash offer and get paid. Call today for your fair cash offer: 1-225-545-1983 (LA_SCAN)

Struggling with debt? If you have over \$15,000 in debt we help you be debt free in as little as 24-48 months. Pay nothing to enroll. Call Now: 1-877-773-1742 (LA_SCAN)

SCAN)

Donate your car, truck, boat, RV and more to support our veterans! Schedule a FAST, FREE vehicle pickup and receive a top tax deduction! Call Veteran Car Donations at 1-844-742-5188 today! (LA_SCAN)

Health and Wellness

Attention: VIAGRA and CALIS USERS! A cheaper alternative to high drug-store prices! 50 Pill Special - Only \$99! 100% guaranteed. CALL NOW: 1-877-305-0196 (LA_SCAN)

DENTAL INSURANCE from Physicians Mutual Insurance Company. Coverage for 400 plus procedures. Real dental insurance - NOT just a discount plan. Do not wait! Call now! Get your FREE Dental Information Kit with all the de-

tails! 1-855-268-0108 www.dental50plus.com/morning #6258 (LA_SCAN)

Home and Garden

No more cleaning out gutters. Guaranteed! LeafFilter is backed by a no-clog guarantee and lifetime transferable warranty. Call today 1-866-846-0785 to schedule a FREE inspection and no obligation estimate. Get 15% off your entire order. Plus, Military & Seniors get an additional 10% off. Limited time only. Restrictions apply; see representative for warranty and offer details. (LA_SCAN)

Home Improvement

BATH & SHOWER UPDATES in as little as ONE DAY! Affordable prices - NO payments for 18 months! Lifetime warranty & professional install. Senior &

Military Discounts available. Call: 1-877-496-0371 (LA_SCAN)

Replace your roof with the best looking and longest lasting material...steel from Erie Metal Roofs! Three styles and multiple colors available. Guaranteed to last a lifetime! Limited Time Offer. Up to 50% off installation + Additional 10% off install (for military, health workers & 1st responders.) Call Erie Metal Roofs: 1-855-582-6043 (LA_SCAN)

Prepare for power outages with Briggs & Stratton PowerProtect (TM) standby generators - the most powerful home standby generators available. Industry-leading comprehensive warranty - 7 years (\$849 value.) Proudly made in the U.S.A. Call Briggs & Stratton 1-844-512-5930. (LA_SCAN)

Prepare for power outages today with a Generac Home Standby Generator. Act now to receive a FREE 5-Year warranty with qualifying purchase. Call 1-844-335-2962 today to schedule a free quote. It's not just a generator. It's a power move. (LA_SCAN)

Home Services

PEST CONTROL: PROTECT YOUR HOME from pests safely and affordably. Roaches, Bed Bugs, Rodent, Termite, Spiders and other pests. Locally owned and affordable. Call for service or an inspection today! Have zip code of property ready when calling! 1-877-728-0264 (LA_SCAN)

DIRECTV- All your entertainment. Nothing on your roof! Sign up for Directv and get your first three months of Max, Paramount+, Show-

time, Starz, MGM+ and Cinemax included. Choice package \$84.99/mo. Some restrictions apply. Call DIRECTV 1-866-734-0452 (LA_SCAN)

Dish Network: Get DISH Satellite TV + Internet Free Install. Free HD-DVR Upgrade, 60,000 On-Demand Movies, Plus Limited Time Up To \$600 in Gift Cards. Call Today! 1-855-654-8207 (LA_SCAN)

Medical Equipment

Don't let the stairs limit your mobility! Discover the ideal solution for anyone who struggles on the stairs, is concerned about a fall or wants to regain access to their entire home. Call AmeriGlide today! 1-844-855-4978 (LA_SCAN)

5th Circuit to rehear Louisiana case on Ten Commandments law

By Michael Carroll
The Center Square

A majority of the judges of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals have vacated a three-judge panel's opinion that invalidated a Louisiana law mandating the Ten Commandments be posted in all public-school classrooms.

In an Oct. 6 decision, the federal appeals court agreed to rehear oral arguments in the case of *Rev. Roake v. Brumley* at a future date. In June, a Fifth Circuit panel issued an opinion on a challenge by nine Louisiana families to House Bill 71, concluding that the 2024 Ten Commandments law violated the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment.

The plaintiffs in the case, who come from different religious faiths, had argued that the displays would cause irrevocable damage to their rights of free expression and that HB 71 required a version of the Ten Commandments

from a Protestant tradition.

State Attorney General Liz Murrill expressed satisfaction that the case would be reheard and reviewed by the full contingent of Fifth Circuit judges.

"Glad to see the Fifth Circuit is taking this en banc," Murrill said in a prepared statement. "Looking forward to those arguments in court."

The ACLU of Louisiana, which is representing plaintiffs in the case, did not immediately respond to a request for comment. But the groups representing the plaintiff families did provide a joint statement indicating that the Fifth Circuit panel's ruling in June was well-reasoned and correctly followed U.S. Supreme Court precedents.

"We believe there is no reason to revisit it," the statement says. "Nevertheless, we look forward to presenting our clients' case to the entire court of appeals, and we remain confident that the constitutional values and principles at the heart of the First

Amendment, which guarantee religious freedom for all students and families, will prevail in the end."

The groups, including the Freedom From Religion Foundation and Americans United for Separation of Church and State, also emphasized that a preliminary injunction issued by a federal district court in the case was not affected by the latest Fifth Circuit decision. The injunction prevents enforcement of HB 71 in the state's public schools.

State officials had argued HB 71 was constitutional because it allows for the Ten Commandments to be displayed in context with key documents from American history, such as the Mayflower Compact and Declaration of Independence.

The law, which was supposed to take effect on Jan. 1, required classroom displays or posters of the Ten Commandments that are 11 by 14 inches at a minimum. In addition, the

Commandments were mandated to be printed in a "large, easily readable font."

In its decision published on June 20, the three-judge Fifth Circuit panel held that HB 71 was "plainly unconstitutional" based on a 1930 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Stone v. Graham*. That ruling concluded a similar law enacted in Kentucky failed to properly integrate the Ten Commandments into the state's academic curriculum.

Members of Louisiana school boards, who are defendants in the case, petitioned for the whole circuit court to review the previous opinion, arguing that the three-judge panel relied on a Supreme Court precedent that is no longer binding.

They also argued the panel's June 20 ruling misinterpreted a 2022 Supreme Court decision dealing with religious activities on public school campuses.

Supreme Court hears argument on Louisiana redistricting map

By Nolan McKendry
The Center Square

Louisiana's redistricting fight arrived at the U.S. Supreme Court with a 40-year fault line at its center: whether the Voting Rights Act still permits, and sometimes requires, election maps that account for race to remedy vote dilution.

The justices spent much of Wednesday's argument circling *Thornburg v. Gingles*, the 1986 decision that created the test courts use to decide when minority voters are denied an equal chance to elect their candidates of choice.

Louisiana not only questioned how that test has been applied – it urged the court to abandon it.

Civil-rights advocates framed the case as straightforward: Louisiana's politics show extreme racial polarization,

and mapmakers "packed and cracked" Black voters, leaving them with less electoral opportunity than white voters.

If Louisiana's map is unsatisfactory, "the proper recourse is to remand and adopt one of the many alternative maps that address the Section 2 violations and satisfy the Constitution," Janai Nelson with NAACP Legal Defense Fund said in her opening argument.

Under *Gingles* and the court's 2023 ruling in *Allen v. Milligan*, they say, Section 2 allows the use of race in crafting a fix when traditional criteria can produce an additional district where Black voters could elect their preferred candidates.

In their telling, doing so is a fact-specific remedy triggered only when plaintiffs clear multiple hurdles and the totality of circumstances indicates Black voters' strength has been submerged.

The state countered that any remedy

built around race is itself a constitutional problem.

"It requires striking enough members of the majority race to diminish their voting strength sufficiently, and it requires drawing in enough members of a minority race to augment their voting strength sufficiently," Louisiana Solicitor General Ben Aguilera said in his opening argument.

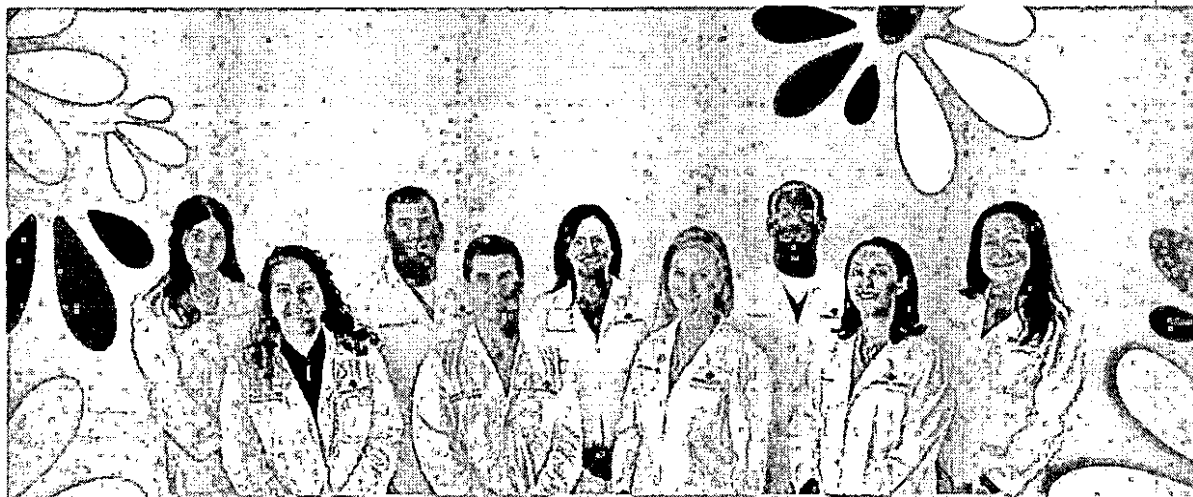
By the state's lights, drawing a majority-Black district necessarily diminishes white voters' influence and enshrines stereotypes about how people vote. Louisiana's solicitor general pressed for a reset: after decades of *Gingles*-driven litigation, he said, the status quo has no logical endpoint and forces states into perpetual racial sorting.

Several justices probed the space between race awareness and race motivation. One line of questioning asked whether familiar mapmaking goals –

keeping communities intact, protecting incumbents, or pursuing partisan advantage – can justify districts that also track race. The state replied that even well-intentioned racial line-drawing demands the highest constitutional scrutiny.

Another pressure point was duration: If race can be used as a remedy, how long can that last? Voting-rights lawyers said Section 2 is self-limiting – when polarization and segregation recede, the *Gingles* preconditions fall and race-based fixes fall away. Skeptical justices pressed for more concrete endpoints.

Beneath the doctrinal sparring sits a practical choice. The court can reaffirm *Milligan*'s near-term status quo – keeping *Gingles* intact and sending Louisiana back to adopt a compliant map – or it can rewrite the ground rules of minority-vote protection.



Pictured left to right: Catherine Diebold, MD; Rhandi Wise, MD; Christopher Rodriguez, MD; Johnathan Wise, MD; Nicole Prosperie, MD; Anne Rodriguez, DO; John Bloss, MD; Amy Ashton, MD; and Trisha Folsa, WHNP.

Expert Breast Care Centered on You

Because your comfort, convenience and well-being matter most.

Breast Health Education | Early Detection | Advanced Diagnostics & Treatment Technology

Call for an appointment: 985.448.1216

604 N Acadia Rd., Ste 500 • Thibodaux, LA
1238 St. Charles Street • Houma, LA
ThibodauxRegionalWomensClinic.com



THIBODAUX REGIONAL
WOMEN'S CLINIC

Louisiana court rules Commonwealth LNG environmental impacts not properly considered

By Alton Wallace
The Center Square

A Louisiana district court judge has vacated a coastal use permit issued for the Commonwealth LNG export facility planned in Cameron Parish, ruling that state authorities did not properly consider the environmental impacts.

Judge Penelope Richard of the 38th Judicial District Court in Cameron Parish found that the Office of Coastal Management, an agency within the Louisiana Department of Energy and Natural Resources, failed to

consider the cumulative climate and environmental impacts of the Commonwealth LNG project, in violation of state law.

The judge's ruling marks the latest setback to the developers of the 9.8 ton per annum Commonwealth LNG project, which would be located on the west side of the Calcasieu Ship Channel.

In August 2024, the Sierra Club, Louisiana Bucket Brigade, and the Turtle Island Restoration Network sued to have the Commonwealth's coastal use permit revoked, arguing that the Office of Coastal Management had failed to consider the

project's climate and environmental justice impacts adequately.

Richard determined in the ruling that the Office of Coastal Management had failed to consider the secondary and cumulative impacts of the proposed export facility. Specifically, the judge ruled that the state agency must consider the "facility's impact on climate-related change in the coastal zone, if any, in conjunction with the other LNG facilities in the area."

Commonwealth LNG's coastal use permit will be vacated until the Office of Coastal Management considers the secondary and cumulative

environmental impacts and determines that the benefits of the project outweigh the costs to the community, the court ruled. The judge found that the state agency did not have the legislative authority to assess global warming or climate change in its evaluation of the Commonwealth's environmental impacts.

The court determined that "the broad language of the guidelines and statutes regarding assessing secondary impacts and cumulative impacts mandate that the OCM (Office of Coastal Management) has a duty to consider the totality of

this project's secondary and cumulative impacts," including the potential impacts on storm severity or sea level rise in the coastal zone when taken together with two existing LNG facilities located near the Commonwealth site.

"The natural resources of the state, including air and water, and the healthful, scenic, historic, and esthetic quality of the environment shall be protected, conserved, and replenished insofar as possible and consistent with the health, safety, and welfare of the people," the judge ruled.

The legislature shall

enact laws to implement this policy, the judge ruled.

"We are heartened by the court's ruling that LDENR's refusal to consider the environmental justice impacts of the project violated the Louisiana Constitution. It is past time for LDENR to account for the true costs of its permits on Louisiana's coastline and communities in terms of loss of wetlands and storm buffers," Eric Huber, Managing Attorney at Sierra Club, said in a statement.

Commonwealth LNG did not respond immediately to a request for comment.

Report calls for \$95M a year to boost early learning

By Nolan McKendry
The Center Square

A report from the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission is urging Louisiana leaders to lock in a decade of new early-childhood funding, warning that child-care shortages are sidelining parents from the labor force and dulling the state's growth prospects.

In a report titled "Building on What Works," the panel links affordable, high-quality care for infants and toddlers to Louisiana's ability to fill tens of thousands of anticipated jobs and sustain recent econom-

ic momentum. The document also notes that its "findings and recommendations are the Commission's alone and do not represent the Louisiana Department of Education's position."

Their chief recommendation is a long-range, recurring state commitment: "Invest an additional \$95 million ... now and an additional \$95 million annually for the next 10 years," a ramp-up the authors say would lift access from about 18% of children under three to roughly two-thirds.

The commission also urges lawmakers to "invest \$30M in the Early Childhood

Education Fund now and ... codify the annual match into law," citing projections that current dedicated revenues will fall short of the \$30 million required to meet obligations in the next fiscal year.

The authors of the report credit lawmakers with laying the groundwork since 2018, including dedicated revenues for the Early Childhood Education Fund, sharp growth in the state's CCAP appropriation, and new Workforce Child Care Tax Credits adopted in 2025 to draw in employer dollars.

But they argue those steps are not enough to meet

demand or give providers the stability to open seats and retain staff. "Louisiana has already put some components of a strong ECE system in place. Now is the time to build on what works," the report says.

Beyond direct state aid, the commission asks employers to use the new credits to reserve child care slots or otherwise underwrite employees' access to care.

Mandi Mitchell of the Lafayette Economic Development Authority, quoted in the report, says that "when working parents in our communities have access to reliable ECE options, absenteeism drops,

productivity rises, and businesses can retain the talent they need."

On the ground, the report presses schools and early-learning centers to expand seats for infants and toddlers and align programs with kindergarten readiness and workforce goals. It underscores compensation and professional development as central to quality, arguing that stable funding should translate to sustainable pay and training for early educators. "Louisiana's economy needs a stable labor force to thrive."

Parents of young children are a vital part of that labor

force. Quality ECE is essential for parents who work," the report states, adding that these efforts tie into existing training pipelines such as Jump Start and the M.J. Foster Promise program.

The bottom line, the authors write, is that steady public investment, a guaranteed local match, and active employer participation can expand access and stabilize providers. "When we invest in quality ECE for Louisiana's working parents, we are building a stronger workforce for today and preparing our children for workforce success tomorrow."

State officials reaffirm Hyundai steel project remains on track

By Nolan McKendry
The Center Square

Louisiana Economic Development confirmed that Hyundai's steel mill in Ascension Parish remains on schedule, stating that concerns raised by Hyundai about road infrastructure and emergency preparedness were "promptly addressed" and that the project has proceeded without delay.

The Center Square recently reported that Hyundai executives raised safety and infrastructure concerns tied to their planned steel mill in Ascension Parish, citing the nearby CF Industries ammonia plant, which had an accident in 2022 that prompted evacuations.

The company asked the state to develop a coordinated emergency response plan and speed up major roadwork to accommodate overlapping construction timelines at the RiverPlex Megapark.

Louisiana Economic Development Secretary Susan Bourgeois responded that existing emergency systems already cover the area

through state and parish agencies, which oversee more than 20 chemical sites along the Mississippi River.

Bourgeois said LED is coordinating with transportation officials and local leaders to update traffic studies and explore funding options for faster road improvements, including eventual four-lane expansion.

According to LED, Louisiana's planned \$5.2 billion steel mill in Ascension Parish remains "active and progressing on the timeline" outlined in its agreement with the state.

"There have been several local reports about the status of Hyundai Steel Company's new facility in Donaldsonville," Bourgeois said. "To be clear, the project remains active and is progressing on the timeline outlined in the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the State of Louisiana and the company. The groundbreaking for phase two of the road work is scheduled for this Thursday."

Hyundai executives

had previously flagged industrial safety issues near CF Industries' ammonia plant and called for expanded road infrastructure and emergency response coordination. Bourgeois said those matters were addressed "in collaboration with our state and local partners."

"Under Governor Jeff Landry's leadership, Louisiana is committed to making our state the best and easiest place to do business," Bourgeois added. "The continued progress of this transformational project reflects the strong partnership among state, local, and industry leaders working together to deliver results for Louisianans."

The letter obtained by The Center Square also detailed concerns raised by Hyundai over the current tariffs imposed by the Trump administration.

Hyundai told The Center Square that "though tariffs are something we are monitoring, nothing has changed regarding Hyundai's commitment to the Louisiana Steel Mill project."





ST. JOHN
THE BAPTIST PARISH
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

618 WEST 10TH STREET, RESERVE, LA 70084 PHONE: 755-5541

John C. Bland

Palmisano Construction
Globalplex Intermodal Deck 2nd Access Bridge
Job/Bid #: 2123083
Breakdown of Costs

Description: Steel Girder Demo
Dates: 9/2/2025
Quantity: 1.00 LS

Label	Description	Base Rate/hr	Straight Hours	Overtime Hours	Added Benefits	Straight Time \$	Overtime \$	Total
Labor	Crane Aided for Steel Girder Demo							
	Foreman	\$ 45.00	18	0 \$	-	\$ 1,260.00	\$ -	\$ 1,260.00
	Crane Operator	\$ 37.00	70	0 \$	-	\$ 2,590.00	\$ -	\$ 2,590.00
	Light Operator	\$ 27.00	15	0 \$	-	\$ 405.00	\$ -	\$ 915.00
								\$ 4,755.00
Total Labor								\$ 4,755.00
Bond Insurance Taxes		Contribution Percentage						
	Public Liability Insurance	7%					\$	\$ 333.63
	Bond	1%					\$	\$ 47.55
	PCA/PUTA/SUTA	8%					\$	\$ 381.00
	Workers Comp	6%					\$	\$ 285.30
	Health Insurance Premiums	10%					\$	\$ 475.50
	PTO	10%					\$	\$ 475.50
	Pension Benefits	3%					\$	\$ 142.65
Bond, Insurance, Taxes								\$ 2,157.75
Total Bond Insurance Taxes								\$ 2,157.75
Material	Quantity	Unit	Unit \$, to tax	0.00%				Total
								\$ -
Total Material								\$ -
Other/Subcontractors	Ant	Quantity	Units	Cost				Total
	SHED Pre-b - Steel Girder Demo	1	1 LS	\$ 29,977.00				\$ 29,977.00
	Laborer - Telehandler	1	2 EA	\$ 900.00				\$ 1,800.00
	Other/Subcontractors							\$ 31,777.00
Total Other								\$ 31,777.00
Equipment	Ant	Hours/Days	Hourly/Daily Rate	Variable	0.00%			Total
	Tool Trailer (Hourly)	1	28 \$	21.00			\$	\$ 588.00
	Truck Allowance (Foreman) (Hourly)	1	78 \$	6.25			\$	\$ 178.00
	1600 Rubber Crane - Steel Girder Demo	1	56 \$	217.50			\$	\$ 5,380.00
	Lull Crane Basket (Weekly)	1	2 \$	933.00			\$	\$ 1,866.00
	154 Telehandler	1	55 \$	75.25			\$	\$ 4,238.00
Equipment								\$ 12,110.00
Total Equipment								\$ 12,110.00
SUBTOTAL								\$ 58,475.75
UNIT PRICE								\$ 58,475.75

Palmisano Construction
Globalplex Intermodal Deck 2nd Access Bridge
Job/Bid #: 2123083
Breakdown of Costs

Description: Crane Standby / Additional Rental Costs
Dates: 9/2/2025
Quantity: 1.00 LS

Label	Description	Base Rate/hr	Straight Hours	Overtime Hours	Added Benefits	Straight Time \$	Overtime \$	Total
Labor								
								\$ -
Total Labor								\$ -
Bond Insurance Taxes		Contribution Percentage						
	Public Liability Insurance	7%					\$	\$ -
	Bond	1%					\$	\$ -
	PCA/PUTA/SUTA	8%					\$	\$ -
	Workers Comp	6%					\$	\$ -
	Health Insurance Premiums	10%					\$	\$ -
	PTO	10%					\$	\$ -
	Pension Benefits	3%					\$	\$ -
Bond, Insurance, Taxes								\$ -
Total Bond Insurance Taxes								\$ -
Material	Quantity	Unit	Unit \$, to tax	0.00%				Total
								\$ -
Total Material								\$ -
Other/Subcontractors	Ant	Quantity	Units	Cost				Total
	Crane Operator - Baker P. in Driving & Stewards**	1	115 HR	\$ 87.00			\$	\$ 9,995.00
	Other/Subcontractors							\$ 9,995.00
Total Other								\$ 9,995.00
Equipment	Ant	Hours/Days	Hourly/Daily Rate	Variable	0.00%			Total
	1200 Rubber Crane Rental Extension	12.07	\$	903.00			\$	\$ 11,706.00
	Crane Rental Delta**						\$	\$ -
	1200 Rubber Crane Rental	11.57	\$	903.00			\$	\$ 10,380.00
	170 Ton Manitowoc 919 Rental 3/23/25 - 8/29/25***	21.57	\$	1,750.00			\$	\$ 37,725.00
	Equipment							\$ 22,086.00
Total Equipment								\$ 22,086.00
SUBTOTAL								\$ 25,320.00
UNIT PRICE								\$ 25,320.00

** Crane Rental Delta = Manitowoc 909 Daily Rental (\$1,750.00) - 1600 Rubber Daily Rental (\$900.00)
*** Updated to reflect 50% per AISCAM recommendation dated 5/29/25

Landry orders moratorium on new carbon capture projects, industry pushes back

By Alton Wallace
The Center Square

Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry, while citing the economic potential of carbon capture and sequestration, on Wednesday ordered a moratorium on approvals of new Class VI injection wells and mandated that state agencies and departments collaborate to develop procedures and processes that advance the industry.

Landry said he has heard the concerns of citizens and communities in Louisiana and called on state agencies, departments, and local officials to work together in developing a clear roadmap to ensure that applications for proposed projects follow state rules for carbon injection and CO₂ pipelines.

Currently, applications for 33 carbon sequestration projects have been filed with the Louisiana Department of Energy and Conservation, with each estimated to require approximately 2,000 hours of review between the time of submission and the issuance of a permit.

The governor directed the Department of Energy and Conservation to reevaluate the status of current Class VI applications for assessment and prioritization over the next 45 days.

Landry said Louisiana is positioned to be a national leader in carbon capture and sequestration due to the state's unique geology, extensive industrial infrastructure – including pipelines and LNG facilities – along with a high-

ly skilled energy workforce and expansive port systems. For over 40 years, CO₂ has been injected in the geological formations within Louisiana for use in enhanced oil recovery projects, the governor noted.

CO₂ capture and storage will extend Louisiana's presence in energy by creating as many as 17,000 jobs, the governor said. Potential investments from already announced capture and storage projects across Louisiana total \$76 billion, driving economic growth on a scale unimaginable for Louisiana, Landry said.

Trade groups and representatives of Louisiana's energy industry voiced concerns about the governor's executive order.

"Louisiana's energy industry has invested tens of billions of dollars into putting our state at the head of President Trump's Energy Dominance Agenda," Tommy Faucheur, president of the Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil & Gas Association, said in a statement. "We appreciate the Governor's vocal support for this effort and recognition of the role Carbon Capture and Storage will play. However, we are concerned this executive order threatens to create hurdles for that future investment."

Faucheur noted that CO₂ transportation and injection have been a part of Louisiana's energy industry for almost five decades and added that there is a robust regulatory framework in place to ensure its continued safety.

"We want to work with Governor Landry to maximize this potential. Let's not let Texas, and other states waiting in the wings, take this moment from us because we put any more obstacles in our own way," said Faucheur.

Will Green, president of the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI), said that while the Landry administration wants to facilitate carbon capture and sequestration in the state, Wednesday's executive order on carbon capture and sequestration sends the wrong message. The governor's order risks ceding Louisiana's competitive advantage to neighboring states eager to move forward with carbon capture and storage investments, said Green.

"The momentum Louisiana has built is no accident. It is the direct result of securing state primacy and leveraging our unique geology, world-class energy infrastructure, and highly skilled workforce," said Green.

"We cannot yield our position to states like Texas that stand ready to capture these same opportunities. CCS (Carbon capture and storage) represents a chance to strengthen Louisiana's energy sector and make us the energy giant of the future we know we can be," Green said.

Louisiana Oil & Gas Association President Mike Moncla stated that the state has safely regulated the injection of CO₂ for over 40 years. Moncla said that since 2010, over 47 billion metric tons of CO₂ have been safely injected and stored

in Louisiana formations.

"We respectfully disagree with the Governor's decision to halt the review of any new CCUS applications," said Moncla. "We are thankful that the Governor didn't cancel existing CCUS projects, which will continue to prove how safe this technology actually is, and we encourage industry to continue moving forward with the hope that the Governor will lift this moratorium sooner rather than later," he said.

The Louisiana Chemical Association stated that carbon capture and storage (CCS) is a critical component of maintaining and growing the state's manufacturing industry. "A pause on applications, regardless of the reasoning, signals uncertainty for projects that enable lower-emissions production, support thousands of high-wage jobs, and encourage future reinvestment," the association said.

The Louisiana Chemical Association stated that it remains committed to collaborating with the governor, state agencies, and local officials on carbon capture and storage projects in the state. "Louisiana should proudly lead the nation in safe, responsible industrial decarbonization rather than signaling hesitation that allows other states to seize this opportunity," the association said.

Louisiana joins multistate call backing crackdown on cartels

By Nolan McKendry
The Center Square

Louisiana Attorney General LizMurrill has joined a coalition of Republican attorneys general urging President Donald Trump and War Department Secretary Pete Hegseth to continue "direct and decisive actions" against drug cartels.

They say the Constitution empowers the commander in chief to protect the homeland

from cartel-driven violence and fentanyl trafficking.

In a Thursday letter to the White House and the newly rebranded Department of War, the group praises recent federal steps and says Congress should, if needed, "confirm" the president's authority to act.

"Without question, there is no greater duty placed upon government than the protection of its citizenry," the attorneys general wrote. "We applaud your

recent proper exercise of this authority to protect against violent cartels that are flooding our country with deadly and illegal drugs."

The officials cite U.S. Customs and Border Protection's seizure of nearly 22,000 pounds of fentanyl in fiscal year 2024 – "enough fentanyl to kill the entire American population fourteen times over" – and compare fentanyl deaths to total U.S. casualties in World War II.

They say cartel activity is fueling gang violence, human trafficking, and organized retail theft while straining state and local police and public health systems.

"Illegal drugs fueled by the cartels not only increase the workload for law enforcement officers ... but expose them to volatile and often dangerous situations," the letter states.

Murrill's signature places the state alongside counter-

parts from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, and West Virginia.

The letter frames cartel-driven fentanyl as a national security threat with consequences "everywhere in this country," from addiction and overdose to the "significant and costly strain on the health care system."

Expert Pediatric Care
You Can Trust

Through Every Cough, Question, and
Stage of Your Child's Health and Wellness



Nicole Brantley, MD



Christen McDaniel, MD



Sheila Pitts, MD



Megan Smith, MD



Lauren Beaudeau, FNP-C



Amber Serin, FNP-C



Amber Torres, FNP-C

- Preventative Care
- Common Childhood Illnesses and Conditions
- Well Care Visits/Checkups
- Immunizations

- Screenings
- Sports Physicals
- Development Assessments
- Nutrition Guidance
- Newborn Care



Accepting New Patients
985.447.9845

604 N Acadia Rd, Ste 100
Thibodaux



THIBODAUX REGIONAL
PEDIATRIC CLINIC

Thibodaux.com/pediatric-clinic

LARGEST PEDIATRIC CLINIC IN THE BAYOU REGION